

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4786

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: OEXC, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN PARTICIPATION IN SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE
FESTIVAL

REF: A. LAGOS 5831; B. STATE 139265

1. EMBASSY MORE THAN APPRECIATES CONCERN EXPRESSED BY SMITHSONIAN
IN PARA 2 REF B AND WILL AS IN PAST LEND EVERY POSSIBLE
ASSISTANCE FACILITATE AND ENCOURAGE NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION.

2. PRESENT DELAY, AS WE HAVE GATHERED FROM LESSER MIN INFO OFFICIALS
(ENAHORO AND ASHIWAJU PRESENTLY AWAY FROM LAGOS), STEMS FROM
ENAHORO'S INDECISION ASSIST NORTH AMERICAN ZONAL COMMITTEE (NAZC)
RAISE FUNDS AND FACT THAT ENAHORO WOULD LIKE RESOLVE MATTER PRIOR
GROUP'S DEPARTURE FOR US.

3. INDECISION, ACCORDING OUR SOURCES, PROMPTED BY NEGATIVE REPORT
GIVEN ENAHORO BY TSARO-WIWA (FORMER MINED OFFICIAL, RIVERS STATES)
WHO RECENTLY RETURNED FROM US.

4. TASARO-WIWA ALLEDLY DESCRIBED BY NAZC AS LACKING IN ORGANIZATION
AND PLANNING.

5. ENAHORO, UNWILLING ACCEPT THIS ASSESSMENT, ASKED NCS COMMISSIONER
FOR INFO UMARO DIKKO (WHO HAPPENED TO BE VISITING US) DISCUSS MATTER
WITH NIGERIAN EMBASSY AND CONSULATE OFFICIALS AND GIVEN REPORT UPON
HIS RETURN.

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6. DIKKO SCHEDULED RETURN NIGERIA TODAY, 28 JUNE, PROCEED BENIN

FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH ENAHORO. BASED ON THESE DISCUSSIONS, ENAHORO WILL MAKE RECOMMENDATION TO HEAD OF STATE WHO WILL MAKE FINAL DECISION RE NIGERIA'S PARTICIPATION BOTH EVENTS.

7. ACCORDING SOURCES HERE, IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT NIGERIA WILL NOT REPEAT NOT PARTICIPATE SMITHSONIA; BUT ITS PARTICIPATION IN FUND RAISING PROJECT STILL VERY MUCH UP IN AIR.

8. GIVEN THIS SITUATION, AND AS WE SEE IT, IT IS HIGHLY IMPROBABLE THAT A DECISION WILL HAVE BEEN REACHED BEFORE JULY 2 OR 3 AND THAT THE TROUPE WILL BE ABLE TO DEPART BEFORE JULY 4 OR 5.

9. WHEN IT DOES DEPART, IT MUST, AT NIGERIA AIR LINE'S INSISTANCE, TAKE A NIGERIAN CARRIER TO LONDON AND THEN PROCEED US.

10. ALTHOUGH THE ABOVE SITUATION OBTAINS TODAY, AND ALTHOUGH--AS FAR AS WE KNOW--NO RESERVATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE, NO PASSPORTS ISSUED AND CERTAINLY NO VISAS ISSUED, REST ASSURED THAT WE WILL, AS INDICATED EARLIER, DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ASSIST AND ENSURE THE TROUP'S PARTICIPATION.
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